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Congress of the United States
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Administrator Mike Leavitt
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. – 1101A
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Leavitt:

I am writing to you in reference to the inaction of your agency regarding the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Superfund site. I am deeply disturbed by the poor response of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in this matter.

In 1941, the Wauconda Sand and Gravel Pit in the Village of Wauconda in Lake County, Illinois, began operation as a landfill. The site consists of roughly 74 acres, which includes a 47 acre non-permitted landfill, and a 6-acre landfill permitted by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). According to a health consultation report from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, this landfill accepted an estimated 5.4 million cubic yards of waste that included residential garbage, construction debris, and industrial waste and sludge until its closure in July 1978.

After receiving information concerning the dumping of large quantities of polychlorinated biphenyl, the USEPA and the IEPA started investigations into the possibility of chemicals leaking from the site. After receiving the results from those investigations, the USEPA placed the Wauconda Sand and Gravel pit on the National Priorities List in September 1983.

On September 15, 2003, the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) started the sampling of residential wells east of the Superfund site. After the completing the testing of 17 residential wells, the LCHD results showed vinyl chloride contamination in 7 wells, with the highest level of contamination being 3.6 micrograms per liter. On January 13, 2004, the LCHD held a public meeting to discuss these results with local residents.

When I was informed of the results from the LCHD, I immediately contacted your agency insisting that more residential wells be tested and bottled water be provided to the residents that tested at high levels of contamination. Per my request, your agency started negotiating with the personal responsible parties, named the Wauconda Task Group (WTG), to provide the testing of 121 additional wells in the Hillcrest Subdivision and to

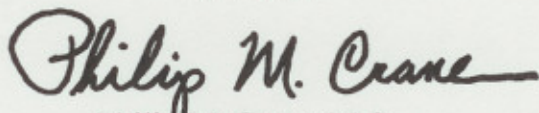
provide bottled drinking water. The WTG complied by testing the additional wells and providing the bottled drinking water.

After completion of the testing in March 2004, 81 residential wells showed vinyl chloride contamination. These results were discussed with local residents and bottled water was provided to those residents whose wells tested above 1 micrograms per liter. The WTG, under the oversight of the USEPA, was also given the opportunity to expand the testing sites.

Since the latest round of testing conducted by the USEPA, I have received a great deal of feedback from my constituents in the area regarding the inaction and lack of communication from your agency. As a United States Congressman and a resident of Wauconda, I am appalled at the failure of your agency to provide detailed and up-to-date information to those residents affected by the contamination. When one of our most basic necessities is threatened, it is imperative that action is taken immediately. More important than that, though, is your responsibility to keep the affected residents informed of what work is being done to keep their minds at ease to the greatest extent possible. While you may be working on their behalf, not informing residents of the work you are doing is inexcusable.

I believe that your agency needs to increase its priority of the Wauconda Superfund Site and provide much-needed relief to the residents surrounding the site. I fully expect a prompt response from your agency not only to my office but to the concerned residents I represent.

Sincerely,


Philip M. Crane, M.C.

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